

CHARLES H. SWIFT

1872-1948

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Photograph by Karsh

FUNERAL SERVICE
for
CHARLES H. SWIFT

DECEMBER 27, 1872 • SEPTEMBER 30, 1948

ROCKEFELLER MEMORIAL CHAPEL

11:00 A.M., SATURDAY, OCTOBER 2, 1948

977, 31104092

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Service

ORGAN: FREDERICK MARRIOTT, *Organist and Carillonneur*

- Grave and Adagio (Sonata Pathétique) *Beethoven*
Arioso *Bach*
Larghetto from the Clarinet Quintet *Mozart*
Adagio from the Toccata, Adagio, and Fugue in C . . *Bach*
Chorale Preludes *Bach*
 a) O Thou of God, the Father
 b) In peace and joy I now depart
Mighty Spirit, All Transcending *Mozart*
March of the Priests (The Magic Flute) *Mozart*

THE CHICAGO SYMPHONY QUARTET: JOHN WEICHER,
 violin; FRANZ POLESNY, *violin*; MILTON PREVES, *viola*;
 JENSKA SLEBOS, *cello*

Adagio from B flat major Quartet, No. 15 (Köchel 458) *Mozart*

ADDRESS: ROBERT M. HUTCHINS, *Chancellor of the University of
Chicago*

THE CHICAGO SYMPHONY QUARTET:

Andante con moto from the Quartet, Opus Posthumus *Schubert*

PRAYER: DR. JOHN B. THOMPSON, *Dean of Rockefeller Memorial
Chapel*

BENEDICTION: DR. THOMPSON

ORGAN:

Finale from the Passion according to St. Matthew . . . *Bach*



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Address

ROBERT M. HUTCHINS

I HAVE been asked to say a few personal words about our friend and to read a few selections that he might not object to having read. My words will have to be very personal indeed, for my association with him was solely of that kind. I cannot speak at first hand of his remarkable record as a businessman or of his great contributions to the development of the orchestra in our city. He did not like to talk about himself, and so, beyond a few anecdotes he told about his father, I know almost nothing of his early life. For example, I never heard him mention his distinguished career in the Army during the first World War.

His outstanding characteristics, as we all know, were modesty, loyalty, kindness, generosity, public spirit, and a desperate determination to be fair. The only differences we ever had arose because of his unflinching insistence on seeing the other side, on finding some good in every bad

character, on refusing to impute motives, even when they seemed perfectly obvious to me. Positive, downright people who knew all the answers did not appeal to him, though he could usually find some good in them, too, and would patiently suggest to them that there might be some considerations that they had overlooked. He would make earnest efforts, often at length, to point out to upholders of causes with which he agreed that there was something to be said on the other side and that it was their duty to take it into account.

His own sense of duty was very strong; and it was manifested in everything he did, from the early hour at which he arrived at his office and the regularity with which he went there to the part he played in supporting those causes in the community that he decided were good. He never decided that a cause was good without making a careful study of it. Although he was more than usually devoted to his friends and his family, he would not adopt their causes without an independent investigation. He might assist individuals in need regardless of their merit, because, after all, they were human beings in need. But he regarded his fortune as a public trust and felt bound to treat it as a trustee. Institutions that applied to him for support found that they had to make a case for good management as well as good intentions. When they asked him for money,

they were often told to dictate their story to his stenographer—after he had studied it, he would make up his mind. He did not react well to high-pressure salesmanship. When he had made up his mind that the cause was good, he would often surprise the applicant by giving more money than had been asked.

His devotion to his friends and family was very deep. If you were his friend, there was no detail of your life that was too small for him to be concerned about. If you mentioned something, however trivial, that you wanted to know or wanted to have, he would unobtrusively produce his memorandum pad and write it down, and you would shortly get the information or the commodity you were looking for, together with the request not to bother to acknowledge its receipt.

His loyalty to the company his father founded was complete. There never was a man in Swift and Company who was not the best man in the world for the position. The procedures of Swift and Company were the perfect procedures. For example, he could not believe that it was possible to build a great university if professors were brought in from the outside; Swift and Company would not think of doing a thing like that. Whether he was right or wrong in regard to universities, the great success of the personnel and policies of Swift and Company during his connection

with it justified his belief in them. He had a good story for almost every occasion; but I think the one he liked best was the one about the Swift and Company representative in England who had performed some service for the government, and who was invited to the palace to receive the thanks of the king. The Swift and Company man said he was sorry he could not go; he had received orders from Chicago to go somewhere else. The equerry replied, "You don't seem to understand what this means. An invitation from the king is a command." The Swift and Company man said, "I guess you don't understand what an order from Chicago means," and did not go.

Children were invariably attracted to Charles Swift; mention of the fact that "Uncle Charlie" was coming to our house got the children as excited as the approach of Santa Claus. He was always interested in the development of young people and could talk to them on their own level about their own concerns as though he were their own age. This was not merely because of his warm heart. It was because of his desire to know. He always wanted to know. One of the things that made him young at seventy-five was that he always wanted to know, and he wanted to think about what he knew. He had a fine mind. He would puzzle over problems until he had found a logical solution; he would have made a good teacher, because

he was never satisfied until he had arrived at a logical solution, and he could explain to others the process by which he had arrived at it. He was over seventy when he joined the Great Books group at the University Club. He was an eager reader and debater. He would let no exaggerations pass. He was a seeker after truth.

As he would not tolerate exaggerations, so he made no pretenses. He was, in fact, the least pretentious man I ever knew. There is a trace of the Fascist in most of us, I suppose, but there was none in Charles Swift. He got no pleasure from pushing other people around; he never did it. He believed that it was better to suffer injustice than to do it. And he was the proof of the Platonic doctrine that no evil can happen to a good man, either in life or in death.

*He was a man, take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again.*

Selections



“Why, Glaucus, are we honored, on the shores
Of Lycia? Why look men up to us
As to the gods? And why do we possess
Broad, beautiful enclosures, full of vines
And wheat, beside the Xanthus? Then it well
Becomes us, foremost in the Lycian ranks
To stand against the foe, where'er the fight
Is hottest; so our well-armed Lycian men
Shall say, and truly: ‘Not ingloriously
Our kings bear rule in Lycia,
For they excel in valor, and they fight
Among our foremost.’ O my friend, if we,
Leaving this war, could flee from age and death,
I should not here be fighting in the van,
Nor would I send thee to the glorious war.
But now, since many are the modes of death
Impending o’er us, which no man can hope
To shun, let us press on and give renown
To other men, or win it for ourselves!”

—HOMER, *The Iliad*, Book XII (William Cullen
Bryant trans.). Boston and New York:
Houghton Mifflin Company, 1898.

Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his
holy name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:

Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;
Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee
with lovingkindness and tender mercies;

Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth
is renewed like the eagle's.

The Lord executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are
oppressed.

He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children
of Israel.

The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous
in mercy.

He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger forever.
He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us ac-
cording to our iniquities.

For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy
toward them that fear him.

As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our
transgressions from us.

Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them
that fear him.

For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.
As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower in the field, so he
flourisheth.

For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof
shall know it no more.

But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon
them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's
children.

To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.

The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.

Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.

Bless ye the Lord, all ye his hosts; ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure.

Bless the Lord, all his works in all places of his dominion: bless the Lord, O my soul.

—*Psalm 103*

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

—*Revelations, Chapter 21*

After this it was noised abroad that Mr. *Valiant-for-truth* was taken with a Summons by the same Post as the other, and had this for a Token that the Summons was true, *That his Pitcher was broken at the Fountain*. When he understood it, he called for his Friends, and told them of it. Then said he, I am going to my Fathers, and tho' with great difficulty I am got hither, yet now I do not repent me of all the Trouble I have been at to arrive where I am. My Sword I give to him that shall succeed me in my Pilgrimage, and my Courage and Skill to him that can get it. My Marks and Scars I carry with me, to be a witness for me that I have fought his Battles who now will be my Rewarder. When the day that he must go hence was come, many accompanied him to the River-side, into which as he went he said, *Death, where is thy Sting?* And as he went down deeper he said, *Grave, where is thy Victory?* So he passed over, and all the Trumpets sounded for him on the other side.

—BUNYAN, *Pilgrim's Progress*, pp. 319–20. "The Harvard Classics," ed. C. W. Eliot. New York: P. F. Collier & Son, 1909.

Prayer

*O Lord, support us all the day long,
Until the shadows lengthen
And the evening comes,
And the busy world is hushed,
And the fever of life is over,
And our work is done.
Then in Thy great mercy
Grant us a safe lodging,
And a holy rest,
And peace at the last;
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Benediction

*The Lord bless you and keep you
The Lord make his face to shine upon you
and be gracious unto you;
The Lord lift up his countenance upon you
and give you peace
Both now and in the life everlasting. Amen.*

